

A guide to

# Annual General Meetings



# Executive summary

**We would like to acknowledge that this report was produced across Whadjuk and Minang Noongar Country. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We extend our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including those who read this report and were a part of its production.**

This report explores Annual General Meetings (AGM) specifically within Australia's community and not-for-profit (NFP) sector. It provides an overview of AMGs, their importance in the functioning of an organisation, the legalities required, and tips on modernisation and broader opportunities.

If you are organising your first AGM this report will provide you with a solid foundation for understanding AGMs, the formalities and legal requirements, as well as considerations to innovate and think beyond the basic requirements. If you are looking for a quick reference to cross your t's and dot your i's skip to *AGM legalities*. If you have a few AGMs under your belt and are looking to digitalise or improve the digital experience or, improve attendance and engagement skip to the later sections of this report *AGM optimisation*.

Formalities aside what should be considered in coordinating your own AGM is if there is an opportunity to add and gain more value from the exercise. If your constitution is prohibitive, perhaps the Board should review and amend.

An AGM is a prime opportunity to authentically connect with and engage stakeholders, collect feedback to help direct strategy, share challenges and celebrate wins, and so much more. In the community and NFP sector, where resources can be scarce, failing to look beyond AGMs formalities is simply a missed opportunity.

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# Introduction

This report explores Annual General Meetings (AGM) specifically within Australia's community and not-for-profit (NFP) sector. It provides an overview of AMGs, their importance in the functioning of an organisation, the legalities required, and tips on modernisation and broader opportunities

## Abbreviations

<b>ACNC</b>	Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission
<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CFO</b>	Chief Finance Officer
<b>COO</b>	Chief Operations Officer
<b>EGM</b>	Emergency General Meeting
<b>NFP</b>	Not-for-profit

## AGMs An overview

An AGM is a meeting held once a year that all shareholders of public or private organisations, or in the case of NFPs members [2] are invited to attend. It is a requirement to hold an AGM as part of the individual organisation's constitution. AGMs are critical to any sector, as an instrumental meeting where stakeholders meet to discuss different aspects of the organisation. Several activities take place during this time, usually using a democratic method of voting. Depending on the nature of a company and its articles of association, discussion points tend to vary. Though AGMs have quite a consistent agenda they are sculpted by the constitution and values of the organisation [1]. This report will focus on NFP organisations with members.



## Purpose of an AGM

The purpose of an AGM is to give members a report (annually) on the organisation's activities and finances for the previous year, to allow time for members to ask questions, and to elect members of your governing body (board or committee members) for the coming year. The only exception to this is when there is a need for an EGM [4]. It is required as a Senior member of the governing body of an organisation such as the Board Chair or other Board Members, CEO, COO and/or CFO to present on key performance areas of their organisation's AGM.

# Components

There are several important components in an AGM. Each plays its part in holding a successful AGM. The three major components are performance reports, voting and minutes [6] and the AGM also serves as a platform to connect with members and other stakeholders.

## Past performance

Review of the past year's activity is a key part of an AGM, highlighting areas of achievement, risk and mitigation, and the status of various changes in an organisation. The discussion has the purpose of fully informing members of the board, shareholders, and the general public of the organisation's operations [1].

## Outlining future direction

Informing members on the future strategy and progress which could include funding applications, contract tenders, projects, key events and services or products in the pipeline [1].

## Voting

Member voting is a fundamental activity carried out at an AGM and plays a critical part in deciding the future of the organisation (i.e. voting in board members, voting on issues, or new constitution amendments) [6].

It is a requirement (as per the organisation's constitution) for members to receive an advance notice (at least 42 days if nomination of committee members [40]) on items to be voted on. The secretary of an organisation (this a legally recognised position) may send out word to all voting shareholders with a list of votes and what that will entail [6]. Everyone must have the information they need about issues by the time the votes are needed which gives shareholders time to hold the best interest of the organisation whilst voting [2].

## Answering member questions

During an AGM there is a period of time where the floor is open to questions. It is a time where members can get answers from the Board and Executive to soothe concerns they may have over the previous year. On a rare occasion shareholders may give their own reports which may include their own contribution to the organisation [3].

## Agenda

Another critical section of an AGM which is usually handles by the sectary is setting up the Agenda. Criteria of the agenda includes venue, date, and time. Sections of the agenda are the welcome, present, apologies and proxies, confirmation of the minutes, management committee declarations, reports (this includes the Chairperson's report, Treasurer's report, and the CEO's report), the appointment or resignation of auditor (if required), election of the board, any general business and finally the close of proceedings [6].

## Minutes

The role of the secretary at an AGM is to take notes of reports, discussion, questions from the floor, and all the crucial information at an AGM. At the end of this process there is a document formed called the minutes. After the AGM the secretary will circulate the minutes to all members, including those absent from the meeting. This will give everyone all the information needed in time to respond with their preferred votes [3].

# Attendees and their role

## Board Members

It is highly recommended that board members are in attendance of an AGM, it shows a sign of confidence in the organisation and support for the management team. It is mandatory for some members of staff being in attendance within their organisations constitution guidelines (i.e. CEO, COO, or company president). Board members are given invitations to all AGMs, as they play an important role in running the company. It is also usual for board members to vote on issues at the AGM [5].

## Members

It is highly recommended that members attend AGMs as the value of their input in the organisation seen impacts being made. It also gives members the opportunity to question board members on the status and progress of an organisation. They are able to ask questions, vote in/out board members and receive other voting opportunities dependent on their shares [1].

## General public

Some organisations depending on their constitution, confidentiality clauses and other factors broadcast their AGMs to the public. This is quite common through hybrid frameworks via video conferencing (i.e. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc) [4]. Though members of the public have no voting rights, on occasion they can take part in question-and-answer sessions.



"As the funding structures in NFP are becoming more commercial, and Boards are (usually) filled with experts, the need for members at the AGM is becoming less important in my view. However, engagement in the communities we work with continues to be important so resources would be better spent in this area."

Justin Clarke, Director - WAAC



# AGM legalities

## Governing Law

A valid AGM occurs only when all applicable legislation, regulations and the organisation's Constitution are satisfied. An AGM must be held within an allocated number of months (depending on jurisdiction) from the start of the financial year:



The Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) (Corps Act) provides rules, known as 'Replaceable rules', [16] that can be utilised if an organisation does not have a Constitution. An organisation's corporate structure will indicate the applicable legislation and regulations that must be met to execute a valid AGM

If the corporate structure is any of the following, the Corps Act is the relevant legislation for construing a valid AGM:

- Sole trader;
- Partnership;
- Joint venture;
- Trust; and
- Company.[15]

## NFP Governance Standards

Compliance with relevant laws to NFPs are governed by the ACNC in Australia. [17] The applicable legislation administered by the ACNC is:

- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth);
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (Consequential and Transitional) Act 2012 (Cth);
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013 (Cth);

...applicable legislation administered by the ACNC continued:

- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (Consequential and Transitional) Regulation 2016 (Cth);
- Charities Act 2013 (Cth);
- Charities (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Act 2013 (Cth); and
- Charities (Definition of Government Entity) Instrument 2013.

Note, if requirements set in the Corps Act are being met, an NFP is likely to satisfy the ACNC's requirements.

Before diving into the legalities of an NFP's AGM, it is important to consider the ACNC Governance Standards.[18] The ACNC requires the following six standards of NFPs:

- Standard 1: Purposes and not-for-profit nature;
- Standard 2: Accountability to members;
- Standard 3: Compliance with Australian laws;
- Standard 4: Suitability of Responsible People;
- Standard 5: Duties of Responsible People; and
- Standard 6: Maintaining and enhancing public trust and confidence in the Australian not-for-profit sector.

## Applicability to AGMs

The ACNC Governance Standards must be complied with in preparation, during and after an NFP's AGM. Aside from the ACNC Governance Standards, an organisation's Constitution must be complied with for an AGM to be valid. (Why? Can you give me a summary here of why this is important?)

## Updates to laws applicable to AGMs

The Corporations Amendment (Meetings and Documents) Act 2022 (Cth)

provided permanent and necessary updates to the Corps Act which is used to govern AGMs for companies and registered schemes.[20] While these amendments are not binding on NFPs that fall under the ACNC, such expansions can be leveraged by NFPs. These amendments include opportunities to:

- Implement wholly virtual or hybrid meetings; and
- Use technology to execute, sign and provide documents.[21]

Note, the applicability of these opportunities are subject to the NFP's Constitution.

## Key takeaways

Simply, if you comply with the below 3 points in performing your NFP's AGM, it should be valid:

- Apply and follow your Constitution in preparing, during and after your AGM (assuming it is legally compliant). If your NFP does not have a Constitution, consider the Replaceable Rules;
- Adhere to the ACNC Governance Standards; and
- Be sure to have AGMs within the required timeframes, according to your relevant State's legislation and company/organisation's legal status e.g. Company Limited by Guarantee (Corps Act 20221) or Incorporated Association (State Legislation).

Note, be mindful of any changes to legislation and regulations that may impact your organisation and the performance of an AGM.



# AGM optimisation

## Digitalising AGMs

When we think of an AGM our mind often drifts to something that is quite boring, mundane and in-person. What if wasn't? What if it was so innovative and interesting you look forward to the invitation to join? Together we will look at ways to digitalise AGMs to further retain or re-engage disengaged members, educate them along the way and to remain current with emerging trends.

### What caused AGMs to go virtual/digital?

AGMs have been conducted in person for decades, so what changed? The COVID-19 pandemic was the catalyst for change. As a society, we were plunged into the world of virtual operations to assist in carrying out in person tasks, whilst under mandates including lock downs and isolation requirements. AGMs were no exception to this.

In August 2021, an amendment was introduced to the Corporations Act 2001, by the Australian Government, which ensured corporate obligations were still able to be met. The amendment gave flexibility to allow companies to 'execute documents, hold meetings, provide notices relating to meetings and keep minutes using electronic means or other alternative technologies' [22]. The amendment was to cease in September 2021 but it has been extended to 31 March 2022. [23]

In October 2021, then Treasurer Josh Frydenberg announced that the Australian Government had plans to introduce reforms which permanently allow companies to use electronic means or other alternative technologies' for AGMs [24].



This year's AGM season will be the first test of changes this year to the Corporations Act 2001, which now allows companies to hold hybrid and virtual AGMs. These changes have made permanent the temporary measures introduced for AGMs during the pandemic. However, this can only happen if the organisation's Constitution allows it, or in a public company if at least 75% of its shareholders agree to amend the Constitution. So, it will be interesting to see how many continue to adopt the hybrid or virtual approach this year.[a]

Angie Paskevicius, Chair  
PATHWEST LABORATORY  
MEDICINE WA



## Shortened AGMs

By using technology AGMs can be shortened as some of the workload can become lighter. For example, utilising an online voting process, technology can easily count votes. Whereas an in person voting process can take longer. [26]



Keep the AGM as short as possible with an attractive drawcard such as good food and beverages.

Angie Paskevicius, Chair  
PATHWEST LABORATORY  
MEDICINE WA



## Reasons to digitalise AGMs

With all things that change, there must be consideration for both 'for' and 'against'. Each Not-for-Profit organisations is different in their own way, there won't be a model that will suit all. However, from what we understand the reasons 'for' digitising AGMs are as follows:

### Increased accessibility for members to attend AGMs

With life becoming increasingly busy we are encouraged to take breaks, travel and experience different environments [25]. By doing this members can miss in person AGMs, however if AGMs were hybrid, members have the option to still attend.

### Recording options for official documentation

Some digital technologies such as Zoom, Teams, Webx, Skype, etc offer functionality to record meetings, save chat histories and visual recordings. These recording logs can later be used to affirm or amend minutes, votes, statements and actions. Further adding to the validity of these sensitive documents. [27]

In addition, these recordings can be made available to members to foster good faith and transparency practices.

### Special guest attendance

Organisations are now incorporating special guests, subject matter experts or high profile guests to facilitate keynote presentations to members at AGMs. Potential and current members can see benefits of becoming members if there is an option to be upskilled.

Costs associated with flying in high profile or subject matter experts can be a financial burden to organisations. Therefore, a hybrid or virtual AGM can allow guests to dial in from where they are located, which can result in cost savings for organisations. [28]

## Tools to digitalise AGMs

Since the focus has shifted from hosting in-person only AGMs to hosting hybrid or virtual AGMs there has been a rise of technology businesses who offer platforms (software) where organisations can host virtual or hybrid AGMs. Some of examples of these platforms are:

- Lumi Connect is a global company that offers hybrid, virtual and in-room services to undertake AGMs. Some of their services include pre-meeting registrations, voting, Q&A, broadcasting and reporting functionality. [30].

Lumi Connect also offers an application (app) that can be downloaded that gives meeting attendees an opportunity to authenticate, vote, submit a question, observe a live broadcast, and engage at AGMs without needing to be present at a physical meeting. [31]



- Vero is an Australian based company that offers an AGM service which uses technology to conduct hybrid AGMs, Virtual AGMs, secure voting and elections, proxy and attendance management. Attendees will need a stable internet connection and suitable device to connect to hybrid or virtual AGMs. [29]

## Addressing low AGM attendance

For many organisations, low attendance at the AGM is normal and even anticipated. While 2022 saw the lifting of many COVID-19 related restrictions, many organisations continued to see a lower than expected attendance at face-to-face and hybrid AGMs [32] Some reasons for low attendance could include:

- The organisation is performing well, members may choose not to attend an AGM, having full trust in the capability of the board and its staff.

- The AGM is basic or uninspiring. AGMs are full of formal processes and procedures, so members may feel their time is better spent elsewhere. [33]
- Members are not sure what their role is and how they fit within an organisation.
- Members may have clashing commitments with the AGM.

There are a number of strategies organisations can incorporate to ensure that AGMs are successful. Here are just a few:

### Timing the AGM to suit members

Consider the membership and who they consist of and when the AGM might be held.

- Does the AGM fall during the school holiday break?
- Is the AGM too late or too early?

Many organisations will also choose to hold their AGM a few months after the end of financial year, meaning members who may attend several other meetings will have to pick and choose which AGM is most appealing to them.



Timing is important. AGMs are typically during the day so our Board Directors are not always able to attend unlike Board meetings which are in the evening and extremely well attended.

Luke Mitchell, Independent Member  
SOUTHCARE

The main obstacle is attracting members who are often invited to attend a number of AGMs all around the same few weeks in October and November each year. So, your AGM must be attractive to them to commit to attend.

Angie Paskevicius, Chair  
PATHWEST LABORATORY  
MEDICINE WA



### Location of AGM

Even if there are online options available, some members may prefer to attend in person, so consider where the AGM might be located.

- Is the venue close to public transport?
- Is there affordable or free parking readily available nearby?
- Is the location reasonably safe for the time the AGM will be held?
- Is the venue inclusive and accessible for people with specific needs?

Removing as many barriers as possible not only makes an AGM more appealing to attend, but actively demonstrates a commitment towards inclusivity.

### Engaging with membership meaningfully

There are plenty of reasons why an organisation should engage meaningfully with members.

By successfully engaging with the membership, an organisation can see:

- 1.improved membership retention
- 2.new members joining
- 3.organisational improvements
- 4.a more established community
- 5.unity within the organisation
- 6.positive change [34]

## Engagement

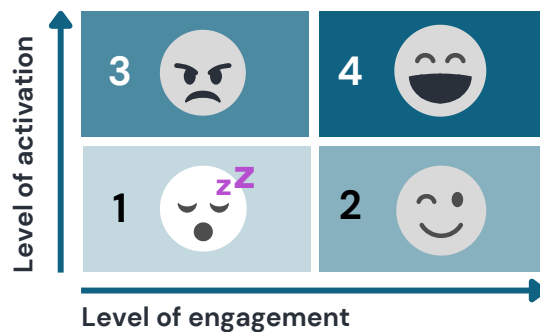
What is engagement in respect to an AGM? Simply put, engagement is how an organisation connects with its members for meaningful exchange [35]

Members look for value and meaningful engagement when joining an organisation. This can look like:

- Producing insightful social media posts
- Inviting the membership to participate in events
- Providing active updates on what's happening at the organisation.

## How can we ensure that members are active and engaged?

Members will display differing levels of capacity and interest (or activeness) in an organisation. The AGM should not be the only platform to engage with members. Consider using the following Activation Matrix to determine how to best engage with the membership.



### 1. Inactive and not engaged

These are members who don't show an active interest in the organisation. They are unlikely to attend any AGMs and are most likely to not renew their membership, but they should not be ignored. Once they show interest and are engaged, they can often provide fresh perspectives to the organisation. Consider the following strategies for engagement:

- Meeting them directly in their own time at their preferred location
- Promote opportunities for them to be involved in the organisation using a range of media



### 2. Inactive but engaged

Members here might have other things more important going on for them. They are often less worried or concerned about organisation. However it is still worth engaging with them as they may offer different perspectives from those who might show an active interest and can provide balance to the AGM. If the relationship is good, continue doing what works best with them. However if it is not, consider providing opportunities to engage one-on-one.



### 3. Active but not engaged

These members are likely to be active in the area the organisation works with. They may react publicly to issues relating to the organisation, such as on social media or respond to editorial letters, but choose not to engage directly with the organisation.

Consider building a relationship with them. If they still choose not to engage, try to explore what would encourage participation. Find out how they would like to be kept informed. Consider asking "how can we help you be more involved". Members who are active but not engaged will likely be weighing up the benefits of being part of the organisation and are likely to not to renew their membership, so it is important to work with them and encourage participation.



### 4. Active and engaged

These are members who have a clear interest in the organisation and it is likely easy to engage with them. There has likely been a lot of work to establish a good relationship with them however, don't take it for granted and keep doing what has worked with them so far. It's important to sustain the relationship as they are the most invested members.

## How do you determine if a member is engaged or not?

There are many ways you can determine if a member is engaged with an organisation by looking at but not limited to:

- AGM attendance
- Event attendance
- Survey response rate
- Social media metrics
- E-mail interaction
- Service uptake
- Willingness to volunteer
- Feedback [34]

Consider creating a simple matrix or table like the one below to capture a member's engagement with an organisation:

If the organisation has too many members to manage, consider automating processes using electronic forms and linked databases to identify engagement with the organisation. This may require engaging a data analyst.

Member	AGMs Attended	AGMs Eligible	Percentage*	Engagement
John Snow	1	4	25%	Not engaged
Xavier Sing	2	2	100%	Engaged
Mary Garcia	4	5	80%	Engaged

Table 1. Member engagement at AGM.

## Tips to gauge interest in a member

Consider some of the following to gauge the level of interest in a member:

1. Tone, volume, rhythm, and timbre when they speak. A person who talks in a monotone voice could be showing a level of disinterest, whereas someone who speaks fast with varying pitch might be excited and interested.
2. Are they focused and not distracted by their surroundings
3. Do they ask many questions
4. Survey responses
5. Collect and analyse data

## Membership Satisfaction Surveys

Membership satisfaction surveys are a simple but useful tool for touching base with the membership and seeing what is important to them. It provides an opportunity to address issues the organisation may not be aware of and improve on membership retention.

Consider asking questions about the following topics:

- General satisfaction
- Preferred duration, frequency and time for AGMs/events
- Barriers to participation in AGMs/events
- Ideas for improvements
- Issues/Topics of greatest interest
- Benefits of membership



For a successful survey, consider the following:

1. Set clear objectives
2. Keep it simple and brief
3. Test the survey thoroughly and fix any mistakes
4. Consider the timing of the survey. Studies have shown that Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays are the best days to send out a survey [37]
5. Promote through various channels including website, social media, e-mail, blogs, newsletters.
6. Consider offering incentives to encourage a response e.g. coffee with the chair, gift vouchers, event tickets, free membership
7. Share the results with participants

For some inspiration, have a look at Appendix 1 for a list of potential questions you could include in your membership satisfaction survey

## Other considerations

In the pursuit of ensuring enough members are attending an AGM, there are a number of pathways organisations can take including:

### Internal considerations:

- Reviewing the constitution to reduce the proportion of membership required to attend. E.g. One of WA's largest charities MSWA requires only five members for quorum at an AGM [38]
- Restricting membership to select individuals. E.g. In some organisations, the board constitutes the membership base.
- Consider reducing the cost membership or even making it free to attract more members
- Consider developing a comprehensive Membership Engagement Strategy (see Appendix 2).

### Make the AGM more enticing:

- Shorten the annual report and use infographics to make it more engaging. Look at Annual Report – HepatitisWA for an example.
- Invite the organisation's clients to share their story and experience of the service
- Provide "town hall meeting" opportunities for members to ask questions [39]
- Consider involving a data analyst or data communications specialist to help turn raw data into a compelling story that engages your membership [33]
- Make your AGM slides and templates more appealing. Changing the way you present your slides can really impact how an AGM is received. Consider companies such as <https://canva.com>, which offer several free templates to choose from.
- Keep AGM business short and add emphasis on networking experience
- It isn't just how the slides look, many of the best TED speakers don't use slides at all. Consider using this guide on How to Give a Killer Presentation (hbr.org). It covers:
  - Frame the presentation as a journey
  - Plan the delivery
  - Developing stage presence
  - Plan the multimedia.



# The team



**Annabelle Williams**  
she/her

Annie has always been passionate about giving back to the community in any way she can. Identifying as one of many minority groups, Annie understands and has experienced many of the challenges of being part of minorities. Annie currently sits on the board of the Association of Services to Torture and Trauma Services and Living Proud. She endeavours to improve the lives of members of minority groups whom are experiencing disadvantage. With her law degree and passion for social justice, Annie intends to pursue a career in the human rights and law reform spaces.



**Ashara Wills**  
she/her

Ashara is a multicultural young professional currently working in the community services and development sector, whilst operating a small LGBTIQ+ training and consultancy services business called Let's Queer the Air. She is currently a Pride WA Management Committee Member and a community member representative of the City of Stirling's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.

Ashara has always been an advocate of the LGBTIQ+ community by engaging in meaningful conversations, passing on knowledge, consulting with the community, and continually embracing differences.

Ashara is all about inclusivity, sharing experiences, advocating and supporting disadvantaged groups.



**Jasmin Paunic**  
she/her

Jasmin is a 20+ year Marketing professional. Currently, a Marketing Manager at APM, a multi-national human services provider focused on enhancing an individual's employability, health and well-being, and social and economic participation in their community. Jasmin's mission is to serve for-purpose organisations where she gains fulfillment by adapting commercial marketing strategies to achieve outcomes that improve the lives of individuals and communities.



**Kayla Clemson**  
she/her

Kayla is very passionate about the mental health sector and improving mental health issues within the LGBTIQ+ community. In her spare time she volunteers within the community with Activate Mental Health working towards NFP status. In her professional experiences she works alongside the Founder, a strategist and a logistics support to help make this goal possible. She is also very passionate and is working hard to establish a LGBTIQ+ Social Group to help the community with mental health.



**Sam Gibbings**  
she/her

Sam is an avid user of emerging technology with a background in health promotion and public health. In her spare time, she gives her time to the Not-For-Profit sector as Treasurer for Living Proud, and Vice Chairperson for TransFolk of WA. She is passionate about helping others, and makes that a part of her everyday life.



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# Appendix 1 – Sample Membership Satisfaction Survey Questions

Adapted from Why Your Organization Needs a Member Satisfaction Survey + 20 Questions ([wildapricot.com](http://wildapricot.com))

- 1.How satisfied are you with your membership?
- 2.How likely are you to renew your membership?
- 3.How often do you participate in [organisation] events/activities?
- 4.How often do you read our newsletter?
- 5.How well does [organisation] do to include new members inactivities?
- 6.What was your favourite [organisation] activity/event this year?
- 7.Are there any activities you hope we won't do again? If yes, please elaborate
- 8.Do you have any suggestions for new activities/events?
- 9.How can we improve our [organisation] AGMs?
- 10.How long have you been a member?
- 11.Would you recommend [organiation] to others?
- 12.Do you follow [organisation] on social media? If so, which platforms?
- 13.What do you think is the best membership benefit we offer?
- 14.What make your membership more valuable to you?
- 15.How does the cost of membership compare to the value you get from it?
- 16.Are you satisfied with the frequency of communication from the [organisation]?
- 17.How often do you visit [organisation] website?
- 18.What do you think is important for the [organisation] board to know?
- 19.Which issues/topics that [organisation] is involved with that is most interesting to you now?
- 20.Please share any additional thoughts you may have with us

# Appendix 2 – Membership Engagement Strategy

Adapted from [How to Craft Your Winning Member Engagement Strategy – Higher Logic](#)

Membership Engagement Strategies are a tool that your organisation can use to determine how members engage and how to improve on them.

## 1. Main objectives

Improving engagement with membership will benefit all areas of the organisation, but you will need to clearly define clear objectives for engagement that align with your organisation's goals.

- **Ask:** How would you like your relationship with your members to change through this plan? How will you know if you've achieved your goal?
- **Try:** Outlining specific actions required to solidify your goals. Engagement can feel unclear, but it is ultimately about what it means to you and your organisation and the members

## 2. Personas

Creating [personas for your target members](#) and their behaviours helps you to know what your members need and how to get their attention.

- **Ask:** Who are you targeting? What are their characteristics and behaviours?
- **Try:** Using existing data to define who your members may be. If you have engagement tools like a social media platform or any automated marketing software, you can gain valuable behavioural data to develop personas on your members.
- **Read:** [Why You Should Be Segmenting Your Members By Data Rather Than By Type](#)

## 3. Problems

If the core issues are not address, members are unlikely to engage or maintain their membership status.

- **Ask:** What are each persona's most urgent and pervasive challenges? How can the organisation solve them?
- **Try:** Using surveys and other engagement tools such as social media platforms and marketing automation to gather data on their problems, what they value, and how you can help them.

## 4. Value

The value of your organisation is how you can solve the problems and challenges faced by the members. There are a number of areas that members can value in an organisation including content provided, networking opportunities, newsletters, current help received, resources produced, or its mission.

- **Ask:** What can the organisation offer to solve its members' problems? What opportunities could be provided? What information is needed?
- **Try:** Match the benefits that can be offered based on the research in steps two and three.
- **Read:** [6 Irresistible Member Benefits That Convince People to Join and Renew](#)

## 5. Delivery

Decide on the format you will use to deliver value to members. There are several platforms including: online, events, publications etc.

- **Ask:** What is most convenient to the members? Fewer barriers will make it easier for members to come back for more.
- **Try:** Making integrating your platforms. Having them all centralised will make it easier for members to access all their associated benefits such as a mentorship program, training platform, online community for engagement etc.
- **Read:** [Integrate for Success: 3 Sweet Results of AMS Integrations](#)

## 6. Monitoring and implementation

Ensure that you have different metrics to track success and any weaknesses. Make adjustments to the plan, such as addressing or removing areas that are not working well or expanding on areas that are bringing success. Use quality assurance processes to ensure that the data collected is accurately reflecting those successes or weaknesses.

- **Ask:** What metrics should be used? How progress of the member engagement strategy be measured?
- **Try:** Break goals down into smaller projects to monitor along the way.
- **Watch:** [Let's Talk about Member Data](#)

## 7. Communication plan

Decide how you will engage the members. Good software is essential for executing the strategy.

- **Ask:** What mediums you will use to engage with members to make them aware of opportunities? E.g. post, online forums, word of mouth, search engine optimisation, social media, or a combination? How often will you communicate?
- **Try:** Using marketing automation software to send the right communication to the right people at the right time. Consider using the Activation Matrix earlier in the report.

## 8. Ongoing action

A successful membership engagement strategy means providing ongoing opportunities for members to engage. This means consistent effort from the organisation to ensure that value continues to be delivered to your members while adjusting the plan where needed.

- **Ask:** How to ensure members will remain engaged and continue to get value from the organisation in the long term? Who is responsible for driving and maintaining the strategy?
- **Try:** Reviewing the strategy every quarter. Use dashboards or incorporate the strategy somewhere visible so your organisation is able to regularly check in and see how much progress it has made towards its goals.

## 9. Who

It's important to have a clear outline of who is responsible for each aspect of your member engagement strategy so everyone understands the expectations and their accountability.

- **Ask:** Who will work on the strategy? Who will monitor progress? Who is responsible for ensuring that the goals will be met?
- **Try:** Consider an interdepartmental approach by setting up a committee with members across the organisation.

## 10. Buy-In

Now that your plan is complete, take it to the leadership and show them why membership engagement is a priority and why the plan will work.

- **Ask:** Does the membership engagement strategy align with the organisation's objectives? Are there any member stories or quotes that can help support the plan? What impact will the strategy have on the organisation?
- **Try:** Asking people who have been involved if they would like to present the strategy to you. Hearing it from multiple people will be more convincing than one.

# Appendix 3 – Hybrid AGM Checklist

Scan the QR code below to access the editable Microsoft Word AGM checklist.



**AGM Checklist**

No	Activity	Target date (check constitution or best practice)	Who	✓
1.	Finalise date and time for AGM AGM Notice must have been received by members (via Constitution)	DD / MM / YY 12 weeks	Board	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Preparation of Board Nominations and Subcommittee Packs	DD / MM / YY 12 weeks and reminders at 8 weeks	Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Finalise venue and catering (if relevant)	DD / MM / YY 12 weeks	Board/ Delegated person	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Officially call the AGM by giving notice to members. The board decides how to give notice to the members (e.g. post, email, website, social media etc). Include the following details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• date</li> <li>• time</li> <li>• venue</li> <li>• all business to be transacted at the AGM</li> </ul> Any special resolutions raised require a minimum of 21 days' notice.	DD / MM / YY 6 weeks		<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Ensure financial statements and audit report are prepared and available for members to review well in advance of the AGM. Note: The financial statements and audit report MUST be presented at the AGM	DD / MM / YY 4 weeks	Treasurer	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Officially call for management committee/non-committee position nominations to be elected/appointed at the AGM. Circulate position descriptions with the call for nominations. The call for nominations can be via mail, email, web or social media, verbal announcements or on a noticeboard Nominations should come.	DD / MM / YY 4 weeks	Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Confirm ICT requirements suggest more below point 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video conferencing hardware</li> <li>• Visual screens</li> <li>• Microphone requirements (consider multiple, or a room setup to pick up voices from audience)</li> <li>• Sound requirements (can the audience hear the speaker)</li> <li>• Stable internet (consider portable wifi as backup.)</li> <li>• Laptop or computer</li> <li>• USB storage if required</li> </ul>	DD / MM / YY 4 weeks	Board	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Prepare proxy forms and make them available to members on request. Members for nomination should include a statement with the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• who they are</li> <li>• their connection to the organisation/community</li> <li>• any relevant skills and experience</li> <li>• why they want to join the board</li> <li>• how they will contribute</li> </ul>	DD / MM / YY 6 weeks	Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/>

Adapted from: <https://agmexperts.com/resources/agm-preparation-checklist.docx> (live.com)